

REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR JOHN REYNOLDS 29th JUNE

SCHOOL FUNDING UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT AS PETITION GOES TO WESTMINSTER

Representatives from Cambridgeshire schools have met Schools Minister Nick Gibb to present him with a petition calling for fairer funding for Cambridgeshire's schools. Over 15,000 parents and staff signed the petition calling for a fairer way of allocating funding to Cambridgeshire's schools. It was delivered by Chair of the Cambridgeshire Schools Forum Philip Hodgson, accompanied by North East Cambridgeshire MP Stephen Barclay. Mr Barclay will now present the petition to the House of Commons.

The petition states that:

- * The current system for funding schools is unfair - flat cash settlements and the impacts of inflation are pushing many Cambridgeshire schools towards a tipping point which is now impacting on standards
- * The current reforms do nothing to address the unfairness, and indeed probably reduce schools' flexibility to direct money to those most in need
- * Cambridgeshire has been moderately successful in educating its children with a very low funding level. Now there is evidence that standards are either falling or not increasing at the rate of similar authorities at all Key Stages. The gap between the outcomes for minorities and the remainder of the cohort is widening rapidly
- * Whilst the Pupil Premium is welcome, it is not sufficient for the weakest students. What they need most is intensive 1:1 support for an extended period, which is expensive but also very effective in closing the achievement gap and giving them a chance in life
- * If a moderately sized secondary school in Cambridge were moved 20 miles to the west it would receive about £400,000 more per year. This additional money could be used to dramatically increase the school's provision for students who arrive without key skills, such as reading, that are significantly weaker than their peers
- * If a moderately sized primary school in Cambridge were moved 20 miles to the west it would receive about £100,000 more per year. This additional funding would help to support all under-attaining children through such programmes as 1:1 from an early age
- * The present inadequate funding significantly reduces the ability to provide a rich and creative primary curriculum with exciting activities. This wide variety of experiences is necessary to motivate all children to enjoy and engage in learning throughout their education.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds said: "We were grateful to the Schools Minister for his time in meeting the delegation. We all urged him to act now to begin to address the unfairness, which Cambridgeshire children are currently suffering. We recognise that with no additional money there will be losers. Cambridgeshire has considerable experience in operating with low budgets and we offered to help the DfE explain how to deliver good quality education for less. We will be maintaining the pressure on Government and will continue to provide evidence for our case for fairer funding for Cambridgeshire's schools."

Stephen Barclay added: "Whilst the Government is not in a financial position to increase school budgets sufficiently to address the funding imbalance during the next two years, as additional funding is being targeted at the pupil premium for the poorest students, it is important that we make our case early to shape the next Funding Formula."

NEW DRUG TREATMENT PROVIDER KICKS OFF RECOVERY MONTH

Cambridgeshire Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) is delighted to be promoting Recovery Month. During June there have been a series of inspiring events to celebrate recovery. Among the highlights of Recovery Month will be the launch of the new Adult Drug Treatment Service in Cambridgeshire. This is now provided by Inclusion under the auspices of South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (SSSFHT) building on the foundations set by previous providers Addaction.

The aim of the new drug treatment service is to encourage individuals to achieve freedom from dependency on drugs or alcohol. A range of agencies will work together, to support the service user and their families and carers. Treatment will be flexible and based on the recovery goals of each individual. The service is now also open on a Saturday morning.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "Recovery Month allows us all to think about the positives and celebrate Recovery. People do move on from a life of drugs and alcohol and we see many examples of that'.

TAKE A WALK INTO OUR HISTORY

Visitors to Cambridge have been able to delve into the city's mysterious iron age history with a Guided Walk around Wandlebury Hillfort. Cambridgeshire Archaeology and Cambridge Past, Present & Future have been holding the tour around Wandlebury just outside Cambridge.

Quinton Carroll, County Council Archaeologist, said: "Wandlebury is not only the site of an Iron Age Hillfort, but has earlier archaeological remains, many of which are a mystery to researchers today. The site is also an important wildlife and nature preserve so I am sure visitors will have a fascinating time learning about the world which is around us but which we seldom stop to look at.

"This event is supporting the BBC's 'The Great British Story: A People's History', a major BBC Learning campaign which includes showcase events in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland celebrating local history and helping people find out more about their own personal history as well as that of their local area."

DELVE INTO BURWELL'S PAST ON A TOUR OF ITS HISTORY

Cambridgeshire Archaeology have been holding a tour around Burwell village and castle lead by Barrie Fuller of the Cambridge Archaeology Field Group, leading the way.

Quinton Carroll, an archaeologist for Cambridgeshire County Council said "Burwell is one of the most important villages on the fen edge, and the buildings and streets tell a great story. The village has seen castles and conflicts, with the death of Geoffrey de Mandeville, raiding Burwell Castle from his Fenland hideout in an attempt to stop its completion.

It has seen Templars, and still has one the most impressive churches in the county today. Devil's Dyke is close by, and the Romans may have dug a canal to allow access to the village from the fen itself. It's a complex and fascinating story and we would encourage everyone to come and hear it.

"Cambridgeshire Archaeology" is the umbrella name for public archaeology in Cambridgeshire. It brings together public, private and voluntary sector organisations to promote the county's rich heritage.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE LAUNCHES CONSULTATION FOR NEW TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Residents are being asked by Cambridgeshire County Council to have their say on what transport should look like in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire are popular places to live and work, where new jobs are being created and further growth is being planned to support this growth in the economy. The Councils want to ensure the transport system meets the needs of those who live and work in the area both now and in the future, so that people can access jobs and the services they need as well as continue to enjoy a high quality of life.

A new strategy will identify how the transport system can be improved into the longer term, so that the transport network can continue to meet the needs of local people as the population grows. The County Council is working together with Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council on the consultation which will run from June 15 through to September 28. There will be a series of exhibitions in the area and people can make their views known at these or online at;

<http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/tscsc>

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said, "Good transport links are vital to help grow our local economy, improve health and the quality of life for residents. Further growth is being planned and we need to explore how best to accommodate this while improving accessibility and reducing congestion. The views of residents and local organisations will be vital in shaping this new strategy. We are working in partnership with Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council to develop a long-term transport strategy at the same time as Local Plans are being developed. This provides a real opportunity to look at the bigger picture and ensure that growth is planned for in an integrated way, and that we take into account residents' quality of life, health and well being from the start."

THANK YOU FOR YOUR RECYCLING CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Residents in Cambridgeshire are being thanked for doing their bit for the environment as part of a special week dedicated to recycling. Recycle Week is being celebrated to help highlight how important recycling is as on average, residents in the UK threw away their own body weight in rubbish every seven weeks. It is important to find ways to reduce that waste and recover all useful materials to avoid sending valuable resources to landfill. To help the County Council is highlighting three top recycling week tips:

Cambridgeshire is one of the best recycling counties in the UK with last year over 55% of the waste from local households was recycled.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "I would like to thank all residents who use their household recycling collections and our recycling centres. In the last year thanks to their efforts Cambridgeshire recycled 75,000 tonnes of household waste.

"As technology progresses we get more and more opportunities to recycle more of our waste and turning it into valuable resources. This helps our environment and our economy in the same time. Just a couple of weeks ago we have seen an alternative, recycled cans torch touring the county, reminding residents of all those cans and tins that may still end up in the general bins. I encourage everyone to recycle even more things more often to recover our full potential. "

For more information on where your nearest recycling centre visit www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/environment/recycling or call 0345 045 5207.

BRINGING HISTORY ALIVE

Local residents wanting to trace their family history were invited recently to attend a free taster session at Central Library. Cambridgeshire Libraries has teamed up with Family History Detectives to promote family history by providing free access to pc's and library online resources including www.ancestry.co.uk

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said "We're delighted to be hosting this event and encourage anyone interested in tracing their ancestors to come along; your history really is closer than you think. This is just one of a number of events that are organised by Cambridgeshire Libraries, they really are about more than just books. Keep up to date on www.cambridgeshire.net or register to receive our libraries enewsletter."

A six week course is planned to start at the library starting after the taster session for those interested, cost of which will be £50 per person*. The topics covered will include:

- how to start
- civil registration
- census returns
- parish registers
- wills and probate

DISCOVER THE HISTORY OF YOUR LOCAL AREA AT A FREE EVENT

Cambridgeshire residents are being given a unique opportunity to find out more about their own personal history as well as that of the local area. Free workshops and talks will take place in Cambridge and St Neots during June and July in celebration of BBC Two's The Great British Story: A People's History series. Through talks, writing and storytelling, residents will be invited to imagine the story behind an object, whether it's their own or one belonging to items from Cambridgeshire Libraries, Archives and Museums.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said "Everyone has a story to tell about their family or where they live. We're inviting residents to come along and share their experiences, discover their local history and create a story that can be passed down the generations. Come along and explore fascinating objects and paintings from the Cambridgeshire Collection and Archives, the Fitzwilliam Museum and St Neots Museum and imagine the story behind them."

"READ IT AGAIN" WINNER TO BE ANNOUNCED

The winner of the seventh "Read it Again!" Cambridgeshire Children's Picture Book Award will be announced in early July. This unique award, organised by Cambridgeshire County Council's library service, is for a debut picture book, published in 2011, where the words and pictures are the work of one individual. It is judged solely by children in Cambridgeshire. Since the beginning of March, around 4,000 local children from 40 local schools have been reading, discussing and voting for their favourite book from the eight books on the shortlist.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said "This award celebrates exciting new talent in the world of children's books and is one of the few to be judged solely by children. It's very popular with local schools as it encourages reading, discussion and communication.

"Cambridgeshire children are certainly very good at picking a winner - their selection last year, "A Bit Lost" by Chris Haughton, went on to scoop nine awards in seven different countries."

Visit www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/>

FLYING START FOR SUPERFAST BROADBAND

A major campaign to bring superfast broadband to local people has got off to a flying start with thousands of people showing their support. Close to 7,000 residents and businesses registered their demand for better broadband during the first weeks of the campaign to Get Cambridgeshire Connected, and the total is rising rapidly.

It only takes a minute to click on the link to register and it doesn't commit you to anything. You just need to give your postcode and landline phone number.

Connect Cambridge Website at www.connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk

People without access to the internet can add their support by using Freepost reply forms at libraries, council offices and other public places. The aim is to bring access to superfast broadband to at least 90% of businesses and homes and better connectivity for all remaining premises by 2015.

The project is being led by Cambridgeshire County Council in partnership with Peterborough City Council, The Local Enterprise Partnership, District Councils and business, health and education organisations as well as community groups and parishes. Cambridgeshire County Council has committed up to £20 million of investment to deliver the Connecting Cambridgeshire project.

County Councillor John Reynolds, said: " We know there is a high demand for better broadband across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, particularly in rural areas, but we need to be able to clearly demonstrate this to broadband suppliers in order to attract substantial investment. I would urge everyone to do their bit for Cambridgeshire by registering for the campaign. It only takes a minute and does not commit you to anything, but will make a big difference to people's lives across the county."

Connect Cambridge Website at www.connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk

REDUCING COUNCIL TRAVEL AND REDUCE CARBON FUEL.

The County Council has a target to reduce their business mileage by 10% by March 2013, from a baseline in 2009/10 of 8.4 million miles. The Council has bettered this target in 2011/12, by achieving a reduction of 11.2% compared to the baseline, which is a reduction of approximately 943,000 miles, thus saving over £420,000 on business mileage expenses. County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "This is good news, we have reduced costs and carbon emissions. However the pressure is still on to make even more saving in the years to come

ADULT LEARNING AND SKILLS FOR ALL

We all know how important learning is for children it applies equally to adults. The Safer and Stronger Scrutiny committee has recently reviewed the Counties support for Adult Learning and Skills. The service will receive funding £3,674.914 for the commissioning and delivery of courses in 2011/ 2012 academic year. So far over 20,000 adults across the county have received support this year.

The provision has had to responded to many different needs including; Library Learning Services, Community Learning, Neighbourhood Learning in deprived communities, Family Learning Courses. All of which can lead to a wide range of qualification enabling individuals to fulfil their potential. The total amount spent Countywide on Adult Skills Funding exceeds £33 million.

Councillor John Reynolds is a member of the Safer and Stronger Scrutiny committee

SCHOOLS JOIN NATIONAL SCHOOL SPORTS WEEK

Schools throughout Cambridgeshire have a wide variety of events planned to celebrate national School Sport Week next week. Many are using an Olympics theme for events such as special sports days, while some will be welcoming athletes and medal winners.

As London 2012 approaches, organisers of School Sport Week are giving schools the chance to be part of special events such as the Olympic Torch Relay and London 2012 World Sport Day. It is being promoted as an opportunity for schools to celebrate the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and use the power of the games to inspire young people, parents and the community to get involved.

Olympic hockey coach Glenn Kirkham will be working with children at Mayfield Primary School in Cambridge, and Clarkson Infants School in Wisbech is staging a mini Olympics week and sports day.

Oakington Primary is holding a whole school Olympics Week running from 27 June to 4 July - the week will begin with an opening ceremony, children will be grouped across the school into 'countries' and will be following a curriculum of sports, history, geography, art, PSHE, music and English activities.

As part of their own sports day, Dry Drayton Primary School is holding a draw to win the tickets to the Olympics hockey or football events which the school successfully bid for.

POLICE LONG SERVICE AND GOOD CONDUCT MEDALS PRESENTED

The Police Long Service and Good Conduct Medal were instituted as a result of the work of Police Officers during the bombing in the Second World War. King George VI was anxious that their devotion to duty should not pass without recognition.

Originally styled 'The King's Long Service and Good Conduct Medal', it was introduced by Royal Warrant in June 1951 under the more familiar title The Police Long Service and Good Conduct Medal - to demonstrate the Monarch's wish to honour those who rendered long and meritorious service as members of the Police Forces of the United Kingdom.

On the obverse of the medal is the crown effigy of the Sovereign and on the reverse the inscription 'for Exemplary Police Service' with a design showing the figure of Justice holding, with outstretched hand, an emblem of laurel, thus honouring the forces of law and order. To qualify for the medal, officers must have served 20 years, their character and conduct must have been exemplary, and they must have been recommended by the Chief Constable.

Cambridgeshire Constabulary considers the award of this medal as a way of showing appreciation to the officers receiving it, and also to the families who have supported them in their work over many years.

Under Royal Warrant, dated June 1951, the Police Long Service and Good Conduct Medal are awarded to the following officers as a mark of the Sovereign's appreciation of long and meritorious service over a period of 20 years.

Councillor Reynolds is a member of the Police Authority and attended the presentations.

Visit www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/>

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